

VZCZCXRO1156
PP RUEHMR
DE RUEHKI #0954 1661617
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151617Z JUN 06
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4135
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 000954

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//C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - TEXT IN PARAGRAPH 3//

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/15/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#) [ELECTIONS](#)
SUBJECT: AJELLO STUMBLES IN PREMATURE ELECTORAL CALENDAR
ANNOUNCEMENT

Classified By: PolOff CBrown, reasons 1.4 b/d.

¶1. (SBU) During a June 13 press conference in Brussels, European Union Special Representative for the Great Lakes Aldo Ajello reportedly presented what he claimed was the calendar for the second phase of the DRC's elections. According to Ajello, the results from the first round of elections (to be held July 30) will be known by September 14. Per Ajello's schedule, if no presidential candidate wins a majority in the first round of elections, the top two candidates will hold their official campaigns from September 15 to October 14, with the second round of balloting to take place October 15, along with the election for provincial assemblies. Ajello said provisional results from this round would be announced November 19, while final results would be made public November 30. Ajello's comments have been widely republished in Kinshasa's newspapers and presented in many circles as a definitive road map for the next round of elections.

¶2. (C) In fact, there is no electoral calendar established beyond the first round of elections on July 30, Ajello's reported announcement to the contrary. Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) President Abbe Apollinaire Malu Malu has said repeatedly that the CEI will not make public the schedule for the second round of elections until the publication of the final list of provincial candidates, which is not expected until June 28 at the earliest. Moreover, Malu Malu said June 13 in a meeting of MONUC's Elections Technical Committee that discussions were ongoing to fix the next steps of the electoral calendar.

¶3. (C) Comment: Ajello's comments are potentially damaging to the DRC's electoral process. Many Congolese (particularly the opposition) believe the "international community" controls the CEI. For Ajello to preempt any CEI announcement about the electoral calendar only reinforces that misconception and risks undermining confidence in the process. Western diplomats have expressed dismay at Ajello's remarks and have noted the problems they can cause. As one European ambassador said, "Ajello has been in his job for 10 years; you'd think he would know better." End comment.
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